

REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **23 June 2011**, Examiner reviewed claims 1-27. Examiner objected to the drawings. Examiner objected to claims 2, 11-12 and 20 because of informalities. Examiner rejected claims 1, 5-6, 9-10, 14-15 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on Thornton, (U.S. Patent No. 5,966,056, hereinafter "Thornton"). Examiner rejected claims 19, 23-24 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Levy (U.S. Patent No. 7,802,049, hereinafter "Levy"), in view of Thornton. Examiner objected to claims 2, 4, 7-8, 11, 13, 16-17, 20, 22 and 25-26 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but indicated the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Amendments to the Specification

Applicant has amended the specification to correct a minor typographical error.

Objections to the Drawings

Examiner objected to the drawings, arguing as follows:

The drawings are objected to because in Figs. 3, 5-7, a differential pair is shown to be connected with a solid line even though they are not physically connected. As a suggestion for Applicant to easily identify the differential pairs on the figures, Applicant may use dash line between or encircle the differential pair and indicate explicitly on the figure that "dash line indicates a differential pair" and the related specification should be amended accordingly.¹

Applicant thanks Examiner for the suggestions, but respectfully disagrees with Examiner's argument. More specifically, Applicant respectfully points out that, as stated in the MPEP, lines of different thicknesses may be used in the same drawing:

¹ see office action, page 2

All drawings must be made by a process which will give them satisfactory reproduction characteristics. Every line, number, and letter must be durable, clean, black (except for color drawings), sufficiently dense and dark, and uniformly thick and well-defined. The weight of all lines and letters must be heavy enough to permit adequate reproduction. This requirement applies to all lines however fine, to shading, and to lines representing cut surfaces in sectional views. Lines and strokes of different thicknesses may be used in the same drawing where different thicknesses have a different meaning.²

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully points out that the specification in the instant application discloses that the black bars in the figures are used to assist in the visual inspection of the figures, e.g., as shown below:

In FIG. 3, black bars are used to indicate differential pairs of ports. However, note that these black bars do not actually represent any physical structure; they simply assist in our visual inspection of the figure by highlighting pairs of ports that are differentially related.³

Similarly to FIG. 3, the black bars in FIG. 5 connect differential pairs of ports. These black bars do not represent any physical structure in the system; they simply assist in our visual inspection of the drawing by highlighting the pairs of ports that are differentially related.⁴

Hence, because lines of different thicknesses may be used in the same drawing, and because the instant application discloses that the black bars in the figures are used to assist in the visual inspection of the figures, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the objections to the drawings.

Objections to the Claims

Examiner objected to claims 2, 11-12 and 20 because of informalities. More specifically, Examiner argued as follows:

² see MPEP § 608.02 V (I)

³ see instant application, par. [0028]

⁴ see *id.*, par. [0035]

3. For claims 2, 11, 20, for consistency, "first component of the fourth pair" should be rephrased as --second component of the fourth pair-- and "second component of the fourth pair" should be rephrased as -- first component of the fourth pair-- to follow the convention of the first components denote the positive parts and the second components denote the negative parts (e.g. see Fig. 5, K, H, E, I for first, second, third, fourth pairs, respectively).
4. Also for claims 2, 11, 20, the directions of "northeast", "north", "south", etc. are not defined in the claim. Applicant needs to either explicitly define the directions in the claim or choose some other method to claim the orientation.
5. Claim 12 is objected because claim 12 depends on itself and appears should correctly be depended on claim 10.⁵

Regarding Examiner's argument for consistency for claims 2, 11, and 20, Applicant respectfully disagrees and points out that the claims do not recite positive or negative parts. Nonetheless, Applicant has amended claims 2, 11, and 20 as suggested by Examiner. In addition, Applicant has amended claim 12 to depend upon claim 10.

Regarding Examiner's argument that the directions, e.g., northeast, north, south, are not defined in the claims, Applicant respectfully disagrees with Examiner's argument. More specifically, Applicant respectfully points out that a person of ordinary skill in the art would readily ascertain that these directions can generally be used to provide an absolute and/or relative orientation. For example, Applicant respectfully points out that the direction "north" can refer to a physical north that is found using a compass, or the top of a piece of paper, e.g., as generally used in maps and figures where a sense of orientation is desired.

Hence, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the objections to the claims.

⁵ see office action, page 3

Allowable Subject Matter

Examiner objected to claims 2, 11, and 20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but indicated the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 10, and 19 in the instant application to include limitations of claims 2, 11, and 20 that are not disclosed in Thornton. For example, Applicant respectfully points out that the sections of Thornton cited by Examiner do not disclose a third pair. Applicant has amended claims 2, 11, and 20 in accordance with the amendments to the independent claims.

Because the cited sections of Thornton nowhere disclose, either expressly or inherently, the embodiments claimed in the amended independent claims, Thornton does not anticipate the claimed embodiments.⁶ Applicant therefore respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejections of the independent claims in the instant application under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based on Thornton. Applicant further requests the withdrawal of the rejection of any dependent claims in the instant application based on Thornton for the same reason.

⁶ see MPEP § 2131

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the application is presently in form for allowance.
Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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